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E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/13/2017
TAGS: [PREL](#) [TU](#) [AM](#)
SUBJECT: MFA: TURKEY NOT READY TO SWALLOW U.S.
CONGRESSIONAL ARMENIA GENOCIDE RESOLUTION

Classified By: Ambassador Wilson for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) During a Jan. 12 meeting, MFA Undersecretary (D-equivalent) Apakan told the Ambassador that the Turkish public will react harshly if the U.S. Congress passes a resolution asserting that the Ottoman Empire committed genocide against Armenians during World War I. This reaction will in turn seriously affect U.S.-Turkish relations. Apakan believes that some U.S. officials are of the view that Turkey is "ready to absorb" such a resolution. This is not the case, he asserted. Such a resolution would humiliate Turkey, he predicted, and force a negative reaction. Members of Congress should think in strategic terms, Apakan emphasized. The Iraq and Iran issues in particular mean that Turkey has a special responsibility for "burden-sharing" with the West. However, a resolution will corner the GOT, rendering it unable to do what the U.S. expects of Turkey.

¶2. (C) Ambassador responded that he expects no change in U.S. policy; the administration will oppose an Armenian resolution in Congress. He said it will be important for GOT officials and other interested Turks to make their views known to Congress and other relevant people in the U.S. Ambassador also noted that Turkey should consider taking steps that would reflect positively on it among the key constituencies involved in the issue. This could include approaches to the GOAM. He reminded Apakan that our executive branch cannot control the Congress on these issues. If such a measure were to pass, we would need to work together to ensure U.S.-Turkey relations stay on track, especially in dealing with the complex regional agenda Apakan identified.

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WILSON